

**Approved Findings of Fact
Certificate of Appropriateness for Demolition
Village Review Board
Review Date: October 18, 2011, January 10, 2012**

Project Name: St John's Demolition

Case Number: VRB – 11-029

Tax Map: Map U16, 47

Applicant:
Don Leaver
132 McKeen Street
Brunswick, Maine

Authorized Representative Charles R. Wiercinski
8 Cumberland Street
Brunswick, Maine

PROJECT SUMMARY

The applicant, Don Leaver, and the property owner, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Portland, seek approval for the demolition of the former convent building on the corner of Pleasant and Union Streets. The property is located at 37 Pleasant Street (Map U16, Lot 47). The reason for the demolition is to clear area for a parking lot primarily for the church's handicapped members. The building is not part of the National Register of Historic Places nor is the building part of a designated National Historic District. Additionally, the building is not listed on the town's list of the "100 Most Significant Properties" as determined through an historical survey in 2001.

No additional reviews and approvals by the Brunswick Planning Board or Zoning Board of Appeals are required.

Review Standards from Section 216.9 of the Town of Brunswick Zoning Ordinance

216.9.A. Buildings and Other Structures

1.a) *To the greatest practical extent, structures that contribute to the character of the Village Review Zone shall remain unaltered.* The Village Review Board finds the building proposed for demolition at the corner of Pleasant and Union Streets to contribute to the character of the Village Review Zone and that its demolition would be detrimental to the historical streetscape pattern in this in-town area, with buildings anchoring all four corners of an important intersection, and would constitute the loss of an important building designed by Samuel Dunning, one of Brunswick's foremost

architects. *The Board finds the provision of Section 216.9.A.1.a. is not satisfied and does not support demolition.*

- 1.b) *Any alteration of existing properties shall be compatible with their historic character, as well as with any surrounding properties.* The building is proposed for demolition and as a result this standard is not applicable. *The Board finds the provision of Section 216.9.A.1.b. is not applicable.*
- 1.c) *New construction shall be compatible with surrounding historic properties.* No new construction is proposed because this is a demolition of an existing structure. *The Board finds the provision of Section 216.0.A.1.c is not applicable.*
- 1.d) *All Certificates of Appropriateness for new construction, alterations or demolition shall be in accordance with applicable requirements of both this Ordinance and the US Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings.* The Certificate of Appropriateness for Demolition is not applicable to the U.S. Secretary's Standards for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. *The Board finds the provisions of Section 216.9.A.1.d. are not applicable.*
- 1.e) *The Village Review Board's application of the US Secretary of Interior's Standards will be in accordance with the Board's Design Guidelines.* The Village Review Board's application of the U.S. Secretary's Standards for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings and the Board's Design Guidelines do not apply to the demolition of structures. *The Board finds the provisions of Section 216.9.A.1.e. are not applicable.*

Demolition Standards from Section 216.10 of the Town of Brunswick Zoning Ordinance

- C.1) *The significance of the structure proposed for demolition, as evidenced by its status as listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.* The Board finds the structure is significant. Although the structure is not listed on the National Register of Historic Places it was designed by Samuel Dunning, one of Brunswick's most important architects, and has considerable local significance. *The Board finds the provision of Section 216.10.C.1. is not satisfied and does not support demolition.*
- C.2) *The condition of the structure provided that the applicant has not contributed significantly to the deterioration of the structure.* The

Board finds that although the building needs renovating and updating, its condition is sound according to a builder's assessment submitted by the applicant and not appropriate for demolition. There is no evidence that the applicant contributed to the gradual deterioration that has come with disuse of the building. *The Board finds the provision of Section 216.10.C.2 is not satisfied and does not support demolition.*

C.3) *The availability of permitted alternative uses of the structure that would maintain its economic viability.* Although the building is deteriorating and, according to cost estimates submitted by the applicant, would require significant financial investment to make it available for permitted uses, the applicant has not shown that it has explored all available options for repurposing the building, including sale, lease, collaborative use with other religious, civic or social organizations. The pattern of development on this street suggests that this building could be used for residential or commercial purposes, since these kinds of uses are permitted in this zoning district and are found in similar structures in the neighborhood. *The Board finds the provision of Section 216.10.C.3 is not satisfied and does not support demolition.*

**MOTIONS
37 Pleasant St
Case Number 11-029**

Motion 1: That the Board approves the Certificate of Appropriateness for Demolition for the proposed structure.

The motion failed by a 3-3 vote.